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EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Buenos Aires

February 10, 1984

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: Luis Maria Paiva, Vice President of FAMUS
Maria de Fatima Castellanos, FAMUS
Dolores Barcelo, FAMUS

Ambassador Frank V. Ortiz
Political Counselor John F. King

DATE/PLACE : February 10, 1984, Ambassador's Office

SUBJECT : "Familiares y Amigos de los Muertos por la
Subversion (FAMUS)"

DISTRIBUTION: AMB ARA/SC
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The group, "Familiares y Amigos de los Muertos por la Subversion," asked to call on the Ambassador to bring to USG attention the plight of those who had lost loved ones to terrorist action in the dirty war. Noting that the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo and other human rights groups which claimed to have been victimized by military-police repression of terrorism had won worldwide renown for their cause, FAMUS would like to do the same. The organization's representatives said that visiting U.S. dignitaries invariably meet with Argentina's human rights movement. FAMUS would like to bring to their attention the grievous suffering of thousands of Argentines at the hands of terrorists. They wanted the Ambassador's advice about how to do this, since it is well-known the Mothers and their allies had both moral and financial support from human rights movements abroad. They also wanted to explain that a purpose of the organization is to serve as an "alarm bell" should terrorism revive here.

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

☒ Release ☐ Excise ☐ Deny

Exemption(s): _____

Declassify: ☐ In Part ☒ In Full

☐ Classify as ☐ Extend as ☐ Downgrade to _____

Date _____ Declassify on _____ Reason _____

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The visitors made the point that their lost loved ones were not all combatants who fell in battle with the terrorists. Only Miss Barcelo came into that category; her brother was an Army lieutenant killed in "Operation Independence," the 1976 battle which wiped out the guerrillas in Tucuman province. By contrast, Miss Castellanos' father was an Army colonel who was murdered on the street a block and a half from his home, while Dr. Paiva's brother, who was connected with the Superior War College, was gunned down at a bus stop. Their membership list of 1,400, which they said included the wife of U.S. Honorary Consul Egan who was murdered in Cordoba, contains the survivors of innocent people who were assassinated by the guerrillas, many in sadistic ways; they said the total number of such victims would mount to 2,000 if the government would make available the facts. They made special note of their disappointment with the Alfonsin government's decision to try "six or eight" Montonero and ERP leaders, while hundreds of guerrillas who were active with these men were being released from prison or covertly filtering back into the country from exile.

Various ways of getting their message to foreign audiences were discussed; but the Ambassador focussed the conversation on the need for FAMUS to secure support in the new Congress for their cause, and to air their cases before the administration's commission on the disappeared. The FAMUS group said they had been in contact with Congressmen and indicated they would pursue that avenue.

Drafted by: POL:JFKing:jmr

Cleared by: AMB:FVOr

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